mental degradation of the area;

(b) what are the steps taken by Government to prevent such a crime and maintain the environmental position of the area; and

(c) what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be placed in the table of the house.

Oil slick in Bombay High

3854. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Environment had threatened the ONGC and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the recent oil leak in Bombay High due to non-compliance of environmental stipulations; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, and the action taken by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, directions were issued to Oil and Naturl Gas Commission (ONGC) on 26th May, 1993 by the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board for taking effective steps immediately to remove oil and clear oil patches and not to discharge any poisonous, noxious or polluting matter into sea waters. In addition, a notice seeking clarifications was given to ONGC by this Ministry regarding the status of compliance of the condition stipulated while giving environmental clearance to various off-shore projects in Bombay High Region.

The Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas also advised ONGC to undertake comprehensive review of all its systems and procedures including safety of its installations and engage a competent external agency for technical audit of the off-shore pipeline which broadly covers health check of all trunk pipelines; replacement of pipelines, if required; and review of maintenance procedures, existing safety systems, emergency preparedness procedures and methods.

Ganga Action Plan

3855. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) what progress has so far been made in the implementation of the Ganga Action Plan; indicating the details of the depollution measures taken and their cleansing effect on Ganga Water; and

(b) whether the implementation of Plan has helped in resource generation by way of reclaiming the land and creation of tourist spots and hotels etc. ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) Under the Ganga Action Plan for the pollution abatement of river Ganga, a total of 261 schemes involving interception and diversion of domestic waste water, sewage treatment, low cost sanitation, setting up of electric/improved wood crematoria and river front facilities have been taken up in 25 Class-I towns of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. So far, 208 schemes have been completed, the remaining are at various stages of implementation.

With the completion of 208 schemes, 543 million litres per day (mld) of waste water is being intercepted and diverted and a capacity to treat 297 mld of waste water has been created. The water quality in terms of Dissolved Oxygen (DO) at all the 27 monitoring stations under Ganga Action Plan have shown discernible improvement and has consistently been above the permissible limits. In respect of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), the levels meet the desired standards at all these monitoring stations except at Kanpur and sometimes at Varanasi (bank side) where the trend has been found to be erratic.

(b) Land reclamation and creation of tourist spots and hotels etc. have not been envisaged in the Action Plan.

Pollution of Taj Mahal

3856. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the Taj Mahal wears a Cloak of fine grey dust with Oxides of Sulphur eating away the mausoleums marble domes, if so, the details thereof;

(b) what are the causes of pollutants that shroud the Taj Mahal, the details thereof; and

(c) what setps Government have taken to protect the Taj Mahal from such pollutants, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) and (b) Weathering depositions of aerosols, particulates, carbonaceous matter and pollutants particularly sulphurdioxide and oxides of nitrogen are causing damage to the Taj Mahal. The sources of the main pollutants are Mathura Refinery, foundries, other industrial and domestic activities and automobiles.

(c) The steps taken by the Government to protect the Taj Mahal from pollutants include the following :—

(i) A trapezium surrounding the Taj Mahal has been demarcated. No new polluting industry is allowed to be set up in this area.

(ii) There is a ban on the use of furnace oil and diesel generators in industries in Agra. The foundries are not permitted to operate during winter nights.

(iii) A continuous sulphur dioxide monitoring station has been maintained at the Taj Mahal from January, 1991 to obtain the trend of sulphur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen concentrations in the ambient air.

(iv) The Mathura Refinery is continuously monitoring the ambient air quality at Mathura and its adjacent areas since the inception of the refinery.

(v) Two coal based thermal power plants in Agra had been closed down in 1981.

(vi) Agra railway marshalling station yard has been dieselised.

(vii) A network of ambient air quality monitoring stations has been set up and operated in Agra by the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board.

(viii) An Air Environmental Management Plant has been evolved. This plan would include minimising the impact of different polluting factors in the identified receptors particularly the Taj Mahal.

(ix) A project has been awarded to the NEERI, Nagpur to assess the pollution load in the existing Agra-Mathura trapezium region to determine its impact on the Taj Mahal and to redefine the coordinates of the trapezium.

(x) The Forest Department of Govenment of Uttar Pradesh has created a green belt around the Taj Mahal by planting of trees on available government land.

(xi) The Archeological Survey of India is constantly monitoring the ambient air quality including sulphur dioxide, suspended particulate matter and other pollutants as well as meteorological data around Taj Mahal. Besides periodical chemical treatment and preservation is being carried in phases.

Workshop on Support to Tibet

3857. SHRI IQBAL SINGH : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a three day workshop on 'Support to Tibet' at Dharamshala was held;

(b) if so, what were the aims and objects of this workshop;

(c) what were the discussions held;

(d) whether any recommendations have been made in the workshop; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) to (e) Government of India have seen news reports regarding the workshop which was organised in Dharamshala by some people in their private capacities.

According to news reports, the workshop, inter alia, urged the Government of India and the international community to 'come out openly' in support of the cause of the Tibetan people.

The workshop reportedly decided to organise in 1993 a festival of films on Tibet, a convention of lawyers, media persons on environmental degradation in Tibet and its consequences for India, etc.

Ganga Action Plan

3858. SHRI IQBAL SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) what have been the targets fixed under the Ganga Action Plan and achievements made so far;

(b) whether Government have launched Yamuna Action Plan;

(c) if so, the details of the plan;

(d) whether there are proposals to launch similar plan to clear the other major rivers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?